

but to make sure it does not happen again and perhaps to set up some kinds of conferences or seminars, or whatever it takes to teach people who have advance degrees that people who are not white have sensibilities, their children have feelings, and the purpose of the schools is not to demean, degrade or humiliate these children. So I'm asking that you vote to adopt this resolution, and any questions that you have I'm prepared to answer them.

PRESIDENT: Senator Withem, please.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Mr. President, members of the body, I rise to support the Chambers resolution. I think on a matter such as this other voices need to be heard in addition to Senator Chambers. I appreciated his remarks and I appreciate his bringing this matter to the Legislature. I agree with him 100 percent on the statements that he did make. This type of activity is not appropriate in public schools. In many ways, I suppose, as a former teacher I can understand the junior high school students and somewhat their errant behavior, perhaps, in creating a skit that they thought was entertaining given the types of humor that they see on television, that they hear in the playgrounds, thinking that maybe they had created some sort of interesting, clever dialogue. What I find incomprehensible and why I am standing to support Senator Chambers' resolution is that the school officials did not take this as an opportunity to educate these young people on appropriate behavior and on the appropriate views on racial and cultural stereotypes. To present a program such as this, as an attempt at humor, as if it is an accurate version of a racial cultural stereotype, I think, is totally unacceptable, and I think it is important that the Legislature speak on this matter. I have heard some people say, wondering why we, the Legislature, are speaking on a specific matter that took place in a junior high school in the City of Omaha. Don't we, in the Legislature, have more important things to deal with? And I guess I would counter by saying inculcating our young people into the proper values of cultural differences is one of the most important things that the public schools have to do. Have those young children in their care for 12 years, and one of the most important things for those schools to deal with is proper values of young individuals. And for the schools to place a rubber stamp of approval on this type of activity, I think, is totally unacceptable and it is important that the Legislature speak out on that matter. I do.... I know Senator Chambers has had differences in the past with the Omaha Public School system. And I would not stand here and say that that